

Branching Out Argyll Newsletter January 2018

Project Update

Now halfway through our 3 year project with

- 10 Branching Out programmes complete
- 129 individuals have been initially referred
- 73 participants graduated and achieved their John Muir Discovery awards (33 women, 40 men)
- 1 Moving On pilot programme complete (Cowal & Bute)
- 2 Moving On programmes underway (Cowal & Bute; Helensburgh)
- In total 7 new partnerships have been developed with the third sector across Argyll.
- 5 fully kitted-out Teams set up in all 4 localities of Argyll & Bute
- 3 NHS staff attended Branching Out Assistant Leader training
- 1 Short film
- 3 newsletters
- 2 annual Leaders CPD events held



Spotlight on Outcomes Monitoring

An important part of knowing whether we are successful in what we do, and maintaining funding, is evaluation of our project. This involves the formal surveys – The Edinburgh Warwick Scale, our Participant Questionnaires both at the start and the end of a programme, and the attendance register. Based on these a detailed report is produced for each Branching Out programme and Moving On project and all the information is used in funders reports and applications for future funding.

As well as the inevitable form-filling, some of the most valuable and interesting facts come from informal feedback and conversations, photographs, case studies and involving participants with the design and delivery of the activities from programme planning to thinking about what's next.

All the participants have been really patient and supportive whilst we have been developing our monitoring. Many thanks to everyone and please keep up the good work. We'd really love to hear all the anecdotal evidence and stories from your activities so if you can continue to send these in in addition to the formal monitoring, that would be great.

Participant feedback

- *It's helped me to reconnect with people. I feel safe.*
- *Enjoyed the sessions once I got going (despite rain!)*
- *A Big Thank You to Diane – Camilla – Mairi. My mental health and general wellbeing is fantastically higher than I've ever known myself to be – you guys are The Best 😊*
- *The whole thing was a success!*
- *Can we have another course please only this time make it longer*
- *Bambi, Ella, Lorna and Interloch deserve a medal. It has been 100% the best time of my life*
- *I made it to the last day without falling on my arse and laughing at myself along with everyone else.*

Branching Out – Moving On

New Routes in Oban.

Dunollie Castle have embarked upon a new community engagement pilot programme providing supported volunteering to create a new birch stand and hazel coppice, with a view to providing further workshops over the year. Branching Out graduates are enabled to join other volunteer groups once a week for activities and lunch.

Helensburgh Community Mental Health Hub

A new project to create a hub run by and for the Helensburgh Community. Branching Out graduates have joined the steering group to plan how to run the 1930s bungalow and garden gifted to the community, and they have started work on raised beds in the garden to grow food for the Hub café.

Blarbuie Woodland Community Garden, Lochgilphead.

Branching Out graduates will take part in the construction of a new polytunnel for the community garden. This will be a new build and participants will be involved from first stages to setting out the poly tunnel for a variety of future uses.

Moving On Collaboratively

Teams in all areas are asking graduates for their favourite recipes, art, poetry and prose to publish booklets celebrating Branching Out Argyll and to use as a future resource. This is being developed into a Moving On project.

NEWSFLASH!

We are recruiting for new Branching Out Leaders and programme volunteers.

Leader training - including a refresher day for current Leaders - will take place on 16th, 17th, 18th March 2018. Venue to be confirmed.

Do you know anyone who is available and with experience of leading outdoor activities with vulnerable adults?

If so please put them in touch branchingout@act-now.org.uk for an application form.



Twigging Out Bute and Cowal project at KCFC, Tighnabruaich.

Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust [ACT]

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With thanks to all our partners and funders.



Branching Out
Positive Mental Health Through Nature



Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

